

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 08610 280937Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----119155 280942Z /23/11

R 271218Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5508  
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 08610

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (REFERENCE ADDED)

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PEPR, AG, MO, MR, SS, SP  
SUBJECT: SPANISH VIEWS ON THE SAHARAN QUESTION

REF: MADRID 8589

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH ME JULY 24 (REFTEL),  
PRIME MINISTER ADOLFO SUAREZ SAID HE BELIEVED THAT  
CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN MAURITANIA OFFERED UNUSUAL  
OPPORTUNITY TO REACH SOME SETTLEMENT OF THE WESTERN  
SAHARA PROBLEM. HE HOPED THAT U.S. AND OTHER  
COUNTRIES IN A POSITION TO DO SO WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE  
OF THE OPENING BEING GIVEN BY THE MAURITANIAN GOVERN-  
MENT TO HELP ARRANGE A SOLUTION.

2. SUAREZ SAID HE HAD MADE ARRANGEMENTS EARLIER FOR A  
MEETING IN SPAIN OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF SPAIN, MOROCCO,  
ALGERIA AND MAURITANIA WITH THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL  
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TO TRY TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. EVERYTHING  
APPEARED TO BE GOING WELL UNTIL THE ALGERIANS  
INSISTED THAT THE POLISARIO ALSO HAD TO BE REPRESENTED.  
THERE THE MATTER ENDED. SUAREZ SAID HE WAS AWARE OF  
MAURITANIAN WILLINGNESS TO GIVE UP PART OF THE SAHARAN  
TERRITORY FOR THE FORMATION OF AN INDEPENDENT STATE  
HOWEVER

HASSAN APPARENTLY WAS NOT PREPARED TO AGREE AT THIS TIME. SUAREZ DESCRIBED HIS RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA AS NOT VERY GOOD. HE SAID HE HAD OFFERED TO MEET WITH BOUMEDIENE AT ANY TIME AND PLACE OF BOUMEDIENE'S CHOOSING, BUT HAD NOT YET RECEIVED A RESPONSE. AS FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED THE OFFER STILL STOOD FOR HE HAS NO DESIRE TO MAINTAIN A STATE OF TENSION BETWEEN SPAIN AND ALGERIA. HE DESCRIBED RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO AS EXCELLENT.

3. SUAREZ SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT FOR THE MOMENT SPAIN COULD DO VERY MUCH AS AN INTERMEDIARY IN THE MAURITANIAN-MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN SITUATION. HOWEVER, IF THE UNITED STATES DEVELOPED ANY SPECIAL INFORMATION TO MAKE IT BELIEVE THAT SPAIN COULD BE HELPFUL, HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO CONSIDER IT. HE DOUBTED THAT SAUDI ARABIA COULD BE AN EFFECTIVE INTERMEDIARY BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ITS AND ALGERIA'S WAY OF THINKING. HE SAID THAT IN ANY CASE BOUMEDIENE FACES A NUMBER OF INTERNAL PROBLEMS IN ALGERIA AND MAY NOT BE INTERESTED RIGHT NOW IN A SOLUTION.

4. SUAREZ SAID HE HAD HEARD THAT THE OAU MIGHT TAKE SOME ACTION TO SETTLE THE PROBLEM. HE THOUGHT THAT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE AT THIS TIME GIVEN THE OAU'S CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESENT STATE OF ORGANIZATION AND PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR. IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO CALPERWYNODTAAU TO ENDORSE SOMETHING THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN WORKED OUT RATHER THAN FOR THAT ORGANIZATION TO TRY TO FIND SOLUTIONS FROM THE BEGINNING.

5. SUAREZ SAID SPAIN IS OBVIOUSLY DEEPLY INTERESTED IN THIS PROBLEM AND HE WOULD APPRECIATE SHARING INFORMATION WITH US IN THE INTEREST OF WORKING OUT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT HE WAS INTERESTED IN HAVING A FURTHER TOUR D'HORIZON WITH ME ABOUT NORTH AFRICA AND THE PROBLEMS THE WEST FACES IN ALL OF AFRICA AT SOME TIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE (SEPTEL).

6. COMMENT. THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TOLD US AT ONE TIME THAT BOUMEDIENE HAD AGREED TO A MEETING WITH SUAREZ FOR A FIXED DATE, BUT SPAIN COULD NOT GO AHEAD WITH A MEETING WHILE THE POLISARIO STILL HELD SPANISH FISHERMEN. TODMAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Subject:** SPANISH VIEWS ON THE SAHARAN QUESTION  
**TAGS:** PEPR, AG, MO, MR, SS, SP, US, (SUAREZ, ADOLFO)  
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**Type:** TE  
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